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REVIEWS OF RECENT LITERATURE.

ANTHROPOLOGY.

General Observations on Anthropometry.¹ — Under the title “Généralités sur l’Anthropométrie,” Professor Manouvrier has recently published a paper which ought to be carefully read *in extenso* by every prospective as well as actual student, and by every instructor, in that branch of anthropology. Manouvrier, one of Broca’s scholars and for many years a professor and a practical teacher of anthropometry in the Paris School of Anthropology, is, it scarcely needs to be mentioned, eminently qualified to express himself on the subject chosen.

The aims of the paper are, in brief, the imparting of a better understanding of the whole subject of measuring; showing an urgent necessity for all disciples and workers in anthropometry of an ample preliminary biological training, and of practical apprenticeship in the technique of measuring, with a competent teacher; and a warning against any laxity in or needless modifications of the methods of measuring, the use of imperfect instruments, and faults in the conception of, or conclusions from, the work undertaken.

Accurate data are precious aids in the study of man; inaccurate data, gathered by incompetent observers, through the means of imperfect instruments, a lax or faulty technique, serve only to encumber the science with harmful material and retard its progress, and to discredit the whole procedure of measuring. This is not only applicable to the study of man’s physical, but also to that of his physiological and psychical characters.

The system of measuring man or any part of the human system appears simple only to those of shallow understanding or superficial instruction. “Anthropometry is a procedure of anatomical research as much as dissection,” and correct measuring does not require less instruction in anatomy or less technical experience than correct dissection. But the operations of anthropometry furnish a greater variety of conditions in which a proper judgment has to be exercised,

¹ Manouvrier, L. *Revue de l’École d’Anthropologie de Paris*, vol. xii (December, 1900), pp. 413-439.

more errors necessary to obviate, more diversity of the manner of action, than dissection. "Far from being more elementary, anthropometric researches presume a preceding acquisition of knowledge by dissection."

Anthropometry is "a procedure of anatomical analysis, serving to make more precise the description of the innumerable variations of the human body." A thorough knowledge of all these variations, unattainable by unaided observation, is necessary to anthropology, which, in the definition of the author, is "a synthetic knowledge of the human beings, the species, groups, categories, individuals." In order that anthropometry should prove of full value and its data lend themselves with the greatest attainable facility to biological interpretations, it requires in practice the greatest possible precision and the maximum of rationality from the anatomical standpoint.

In all his work the one who measures should have a well-defined aim, but be free of preconceived notions; he should have a precise definition as to what is to be measured and registered, at least an approximative estimation of the aptness of the instruments used to answer the requirements, and a practical knowledge of the technique of his measuring; he must be able to exercise a proper individual discretion in connection with the various irregularities encountered, and capable of a correct biological interpretation of the conditions met and data secured. Such competencies, it is self-evident, require a long preliminary preparation in anatomy, physiology, and other branches of science, as well as a practical course in measuring.

The best preparation for anthropometrical researches is found in the *ensemble* of medical studies; even these studies, however, are not sufficient until supplemented by a special anthropometric preparation.

A text-book instruction in anthropometry is not sufficient; it is the practical apprenticeship in the operatory technique of anthropometry which becomes more and more indispensable; this fact commences to be generally acknowledged.

Unnecessary modifications of simple and good instruments or methods are pernicious. It is possible to conserve and progress at the same time.

It is most important that ciphers obtained by one investigator should be comparable with those of others; if there be any personal errors resulting from the technique or other causes, there results only an apparent comparability, which is false in some particulars and leads to more or less considerable errors.

If the one who would measure lacks in the anatomical and physiological understanding of his work and its aims, his work should be regulated and overseen up to its minutest details by one who has such qualities.

The author ends his able paper by insisting once more upon the fact that "if a numerical expression of conditions, precious in all the sciences, can also occasionally be obtained with a sufficient accuracy in anatomy, respectively anthropology, it is only after a long theoretical, doubled by a technical, preparation of the investigator."

A. H.

The North Americans of Yesterday. — In an attractive volume Mr. F. S. Dellenbaugh¹ has described the Amerind race as it existed before the deterioration began from contact with the whites. The work is based upon a series of lectures delivered before the Lowell Institute of Boston in 1894. The author has adopted a "culture" rather than a "time classification" — in accordance with the present teachings of anthropology. In the introductory chapter popular errors regarding the character of the Amerind are pointed out and the fact emphasized that the whites surpassed them in cruelty. Popular contempt for the Amerind is largely due to ignorance.

Of a fairly uniform physical type, the Amerinds are divided into many linguistic stocks, "as remarkable for their separation in a body from the Old World languages as in their separation from each other." The development of so many languages and dialects must have required a long period of isolation; not only do we find a language for each group, but oftentimes a language for the priestly class and another for the people. By their picture-writing and hieroglyphs the Amerinds illustrate several stages in the development of written language. Southwest of the Sierra Nevadas painted characters are found; painted and scratched, from Colorado River to Georgia; elsewhere in America they are pecked or scratched. The order of development of written characters is, first, mnemonic; second, ideographic; third, phonetic. The last stage was within the grasp of the Mayan stock; they also had a well-developed numeral system.

Among the industrial arts that pertain to savagery basketry is one of the earliest developed, and the Amerinds were conspicuously successful as basket-makers. For the manufacture of pottery a

¹ Dellenbaugh, F. S. *The North Americans of Yesterday. A Comparative Study of North-American Indian Life, Customs, and Products, on the Theory of the Ethnic Unity of the Race.* New York, Putnams, 1901. 8vo, xxvi + 487 pp., over 350 illustrations.